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THE DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATES IN KANSAS^{*}

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THE PROBLEM

It is exceedingly important for anyone engaged in any kind of work from time to time to survey the results of that work. This is as important in education as in any other line of endeavor. In late years great changes in the general conception of education have come about; more particularly in respect to the high school and its finished product. There is little definite first-hand information about what the high-school graduate really does after leaving the high school. The first definite material taken from first-hand investigation seems to be the account by Shallies in the *School Review* for February, 1913, of an inquiry made by the author among seventy-five high schools in the state of New York. He was particularly interested in the high-school graduate who went on to a normal school. Later in the same year a study similar in form was made by Mitchell concerning the high-school graduates of the state of Iowa. This study, however, did not take up any very definite comparison of the normal-school group as suggested by Shallies; it confined its investigation mostly to the relative standing of the states of Iowa and New York as to the groups entering teaching, liberal-arts colleges, clerical work, and farming, with the relation of the high school to each.

The present investigation was made for the state of Kansas, with especial reference to all the important callings entered by a large number of high-school graduates, and gives from time to time a comparison of the standing of this state with Iowa and New York.

^{*} For more complete treatment see the master's thesis by the author upon the same subject, University of Chicago Libraries, 1916.

In general, an attempt has been made to answer the following questions:

1. What are the chief activities entered upon by high-school graduates in Kansas after graduation?
2. What is the relative standing, as students, of the group entering each calling?
3. What seems to be the chief function of the high school in Kansas?
4. How do conditions in Kansas compare with those in other states?
5. What percentage of high-school graduates in Kansas enter the various callings?

THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

In March, 1915, a circular letter was sent to all the high schools in Kansas maintaining a four-year course, explaining just what information was desired and asking replies stating whether they would be willing to help. To those who were interested, blanks sufficient for each graduate for the year 1914 were sent. These blanks asked for a transcript of the grades of each pupil for the whole of the four-year course and a statement of what each graduate had been doing since graduation. Eventually, 47 high schools responded and the records of 735 graduates were secured.

The information thus secured was summarized as follows: The average for the four years for each pupil was found. A table was then made for each school, showing the number of graduates and the average grade of each. The grades from each school were divided into tertiles as nearly equal in number as possible. The forty-seven tables were then combined in a single table, and this was divided, so that the number of pupils in the highest, the middle, and the lower tertiles was indicated. The pupils were then divided into classes according to the calling they had entered, and a classification was made showing how many of a given calling were to be found in the upper tertile, how many in the middle, and how many in the lower. Thus it was found that there were 212 graduates who entered the teaching profession. Had these been average students,

we should have expected to find about 70 in each of the three tertiles. But we actually find that there are but 51 in the lowest tertile, 78 in the middle, and 83 in the highest. This, therefore, seems to indicate that since there are fewer in the lower and more in the upper tertile than we should expect from an average, the scholarship of the graduates who entered teaching is above the average. The same method was followed for all the callings listed. Comparisons were then made with the other states, Iowa and New York, and final conclusions were drawn.

The distribution of the graduates according to the calling entered after completing the high-school course may be seen in Table I.

TABLE I

Calling	Number Entering	Percentage of the Whole
Teaching.....	212	29
Liberal-arts colleges.....	142	19
Remained at home.....	85	11
Clerical work.....	64	8
Calling unknown.....	44	6
Normal schools.....	37	5
Engineering schools.....	28	4
Other professional schools....	26	3
Farmers.....	23	3
Business college.....	23	3
Business.....	18	3
Postgraduate in high school..	15	2
Scattering.....	18	3
Total.....	735	99

Table II indicates the ranking of the graduates who entered the various callings. "Expected" indicates the number of graduates who would be in each tertile if the divisions were equal. "Actual" shows the number really found in each division. "Per cent" indicates the number of students found in each tertile for every hundred found in all three tertiles.

Table III compares the findings in New York, Iowa, and Kansas. The percentages in each tertile of the principal divisions are given. The figures for New York are taken from Shallies, those for Iowa from Mitchell. A * indicates no data.

TABLE II

	TEACHING			COLLEGE			AT HOME			CLERKS			NORMAL SCHOOL		
	Expected	Actual	Per Cent	Expected	Actual	Per Cent	Expected	Actual	Per Cent	Expected	Actual	Per Cent	Expected	Actual	Per Cent
Upper tertile	71	83	39	47	54	38	28	25	29	21	18	28	12	14	38
Middle tertile	71	78	37	47	36	25	28	33	39	21	22	34	12	10	27
Lower tertile	71	51	24	47	52	37	28	27	32	21	24	38	12	13	35
	AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE			FARMING			ENGINEERS			BUSINESS			TRADES		
Upper tertile	2	2	33	8	4	17	9	6	21	6	3	17	2	1	17
Middle tertile	2	2	33	8	10	43	9	13	46	6	9	50	2	4	67
Lower tertile	2	2	33	8	9	39	9	9	32	6	6	33	2	1	17
	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS			POSTGRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL			BUSINESS COLLEGES			MUSIC SCHOOLS			UNKNOWN		
Upper tertile	9	8	31	5	8	53	8	5	22	2	3	50	15	8	18
Middle tertile	9	9	35	5	5	33	8	10	43	2	1	17	15	20	46
Lower tertile	9	9	35	5	2	13	8	8	35	2	2	33	15	16	36

TABLE III

	TEACHING			COLLEGE			AT HOME			CLERKS			NORMAL SCHOOL		
	N.Y.	Ia.	Kan.	N.Y.	Ia.	Kan.	N.Y.	Ia.	Kan.	N.Y.	Ia.	Kan.	N.Y.	Ia.	Kan.
Upper tertile	39	44	39	41	47	38	46	28	29	*	21	28	30	*	38
Middle tertile	25	35	37	33	30	25	37	36	39	*	39	34	30	*	27
Lower tertile	36	21	24	26	23	37	17	36	32	*	40	38	40	*	35
	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL			BUSINESS			TRADES			FARMING			MUSICIANS		
Upper tertile	8	24	31	27	16	17	16	*	17	*	10	17	*	37	50
Middle tertile	40	26	35	33	56	50	34	*	07	*	45	43	*	39	17
Lower tertile	52	50	35	40	28	33	50	*	17	*	45	39	*	24	33

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

1. Of the graduates of Kansas high schools, 29 per cent enter at once upon the work of teaching. No other calling comes within

10 per cent of this. The pupils who enter this profession are generally the better class of pupils.

2. Another 19 per cent of the graduates enter liberal-arts colleges at once. These students are but slightly above the average in scholarship.

3. Of the total, 11 per cent remain at home. They are generally below the average in scholarship.

4. The clerical professions are entered by 8 per cent. They are of a lower class still than those who remain at home.

5. It was impossible to get information with regard to the plans of 6 per cent of the graduates. It is noteworthy that only 18 per cent of these are found in the upper tertile.

6. The normal schools receive 5 per cent. These are about average students.

7. Engineering schools come next with 4 per cent. As a whole, they are somewhat deficient in scholarship.

8. Professional schools follow with 3 per cent. They are about average students.

9. Farmers are represented by 3 per cent. They are the poorer class of students.

10. Business colleges take 3 per cent. These also are of the poorer class of students.

11. Business claims 3 per cent. Only 17 per cent are found in the highest tertile, and 50 per cent are found in the middle tertile.

12. Only 2 per cent return to the high school for a postgraduate course. These are distinctly of the better class of students, more than half of them being in the highest tertile.

13. Less than 1 per cent go to agricultural colleges. They seem to be about average students.

14. Less than 3 per cent enter trades. These come from the middle class.

15. About 1 per cent of the better class of students enter music schools.

THE CHIEF FUNCTIONS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL IN KANSAS

In Kansas, at least, it is evident that two of the main functions of the high school are to prepare the graduate to teach and to fit

him to enter the liberal-arts colleges. It is highly probable that in preparing the student to teach the school is in many cases preparing him to enter college at a later date. The importance of these two functions may be seen when one recalls that the two together comprise 48 per cent of all the graduates of the high schools.

In the West, or Middle West, the idea has crept in that the high school should be "the poor man's college," with much greater stress laid upon providing for the general community needs than for fitting students for college alone. States including Iowa and Kansas have passed laws giving special encouragement and financial aid to high schools which comply with certain conditions relative to equipment, the qualification of teachers, and the giving of courses designed to train teachers for the rural school. Courses in home economics have been encouraged in the same manner, and as a result we find that the high schools in these states, at least, have about four important immediate aims in their teaching where the high schools of yesterday had but one—the fitting of the student for college. These four aims, in the order of their importance, judged by the number of graduates entering the various callings, are: (1) to fit the student to teach, (2) to prepare him to enter college, (3) to fit him for home life, and (4) to fit him for clerical work.

It may be seen that in Kansas, at least, the high school neither fits directly for agricultural work nor for entrance to agricultural colleges. The agricultural college, the normal school, the business college, trades, music schools, and business in general do not draw upon the supply of high-school graduates for their recruits. Each may and probably does draw upon the undergraduate in the high school, but in a much larger way it draws upon the rural-school graduate and the home itself.

NEW YORK, IOWA, AND KANSAS COMPARED

Iowa and Kansas agree that those students who enter teaching are among the best in the high school. Those in New York who enter teaching are distinctly inferior.

Both Iowa and New York seem to excel Kansas in the quality of the students who enter college.

Iowa and Kansas agree that those who remain at home belong in the middle or lower class. New York, on the other hand, finds that 46 per cent of those who remain at home are among the best students.

Iowa and Kansas agree that those who enter clerical work are from the poorer class of students.

New York finds that the pupils who enter normal schools are below average. Kansas finds hers about average.